

## Kim Isn't Feeding His Army

It appears that North Korea is having trouble feeding its army.

*The North Korean authorities have ramped up ideological and military training since the beginning of the month, but reports have emerged that they are not distributing the necessary food or supplies for soldiers involved in the exercises, causing morale to plummet.*

*"The 12th Army Corps began exercises on the first of the month, but the leading commander said during opening inspections that he had merely received orders to carry out the drills, but had not received any accompanying provisions - quite the disconcerting welcome," a source in Ryanggang Province informed Daily NK on December 5.*

*"After this, the soldiers were taken through the ideological and physical drills and told to express their enthusiasm for becoming 'young heroes of the nation,' but their reactions were lukewarm at best."*

*Soldiers typically look forward to the beginning of these drills each December 1, as they are usually provided with a reasonable meal, but this year it appears that the authorities have neglected to provide the food supplies and have instead focused solely on demanding loyalty from the soldiers.* (<http://www.dailynk.com/english/read.php?num=14877&catald=nk01500>)

Analysis. This is in addition to the probably massive parasitic infections effecting the Korea Peoples Army (KPA). This week and the following one are the culmination of the KPA's semi annual training cycle. Most of the live firing events occur during this time. This includes short range missile firings of bombardment rockets and anti ship missiles. So far none of these have been reported. These firings usually occur off the eastern coast and impact within 100 miles of North Korea.

I reported on the parasite infection problem in my article *Silence of the Kim* which is still on the site. It appears that Kim does not have the food available to feed the parasites infecting his soldiers as well as the soldiers themselves. It is possible that Kim really does not have the food due to the drought of last July as well as the economic sanctions finally implemented by the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). In choosing who to feed first, he may well have chosen to feed the oligarchy first and feed the army at the normal rate. This would probably keep political peace in Pyongyang. However, as you look at the senior officers who accompany Kim, none of them appear to be eating very well.

The other possibility is that he is hoarding the food for an attack. Kim may be planning to feed the KPA well for about a week prior to an attack so that they actually have some fighting power. How much strength the KPA actually has may well be determined by the conduct of the end of cycle exercises. From the article above it is doubtful that the soldiers of the KPA, at least of the 12<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, will make much more than a token effort to see that the exercises complete. They may have little more on their minds than food and warmth.

It is difficult to judge when North Korea is preparing for an attack as approximately two-thirds of the KPA is deployed within 100 kilometers of the Demarcation Line. Since they don't have very far to travel and all of their equipment and resources are also forward deployed, it has been estimated that they

could attack with only six to twelve hours warning. Normal US procedures require units to be ready for war in twelve to 24 hours depending on the type of unit and its normal state of readiness. The time is longer if travel is involved.

I believe that the period from December 18, 2017 to January 31, 2018 is a critical period for an attack. After the middle January, the KPA normally begins training the new soldiers. This takes six to eight weeks. Then the KPA goes to the farms to do most of the Spring Planting. This takes four to six weeks as the units progress north with the rise in temperatures. The semi annual cycle culminates with exercises beginning in early June.

Kim Il Sung chose to invade the South on June 27, 1950 planning that the conquest of the South would only take four to six weeks, That would allow the KPA time to return to the North to complete the harvest of whatever crops were still available as well as to appropriate most of the harvest in the South and take it north. He failed. It is possible that Kim Jong Un may choose to again emulate his grandfather and wait until the Summer. Lack of food for the KPA may be the deciding factor on invasion.